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ABSTRACT

The study investigated why Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) teachers leave the Bureau schools on the Pine Ridge Oglala Sioux Reservation in South Dakota. The BIA Aberdeen Area Office was contacted to obtain information on teacher turnover. Records were examined to learn the number of teachers teaching on Pine Ridge Reservation during 1965-67 who are no longer employed there. Questionnaires filled out by the former teachers (51) revealed that most (57%) resigned because of the administration, isolation, or for personal reasons. The majority of the teachers who left the profession were women, mainly for personal reasons, retirement, health, or marriage. Administration was the reason men listed most often for leaving. The principals of the schools played a decisive part in their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with teaching experiences. Records indicated that approximately 41% of the new teachers, if they complete their first year, do not return for a second year. The teachers ranged in age from 21-75 with an average age of 45. This study showed that more than half of the vacancies were created by the teachers under 30 or over 50. One recommendation for teacher retention was that a realistic picture of living in a small isolated Indian community be presented. (FF)

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REASONS WHY TEACHERS LEAVE THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS SCHOOLS ON PINE RIDGE RESERVATION

A Project Paper

Presented to

Mr. Dwayne E. Snell of the Graduate Faculty

Northern State College

Aberdeen, South Dakota

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science in Education

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by

Jerome L. Dayton

July 1971

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APPROVAL SHEET

This project paper is submitted by Jerome L. Dayton in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Science in Education at Northern State College, Aberdeen, South Dakota, and is hereby approved by the sponsor under whose direction the study was made.

Project Sponsor Dwayne E. Sell

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Indian Affairs employs approximately 2,400 professional teachers. In addition, it has some 450 administrative and supervisory education personnel. This professional staff works in about 240 school and dormitories from the Florida Everglades to the Arctic Ocean. Some of the schools are day schools and some are boarding schools. Some are in the heart of the Navajo Reservation, or on the Alaska Tundra, and some are in such places as metropolitan Phoenix, or Albuquerque, or Riverside, California. Last year the enrollments ranged from 2,100 at Intermountain School in Utah to ten at the Birney Day School in Montana. One is a post-high school vocational-technical school and one specializes in the various art fields.

Staffing these varied schools is a continual task for the Bureau administration as it seeks to find qualified personnel to teach Indian children. As a result of a survey made in the spring of 1968 much is known about the characteristics of our teaching and administrative-supervisory staff with respect to such matters as age, sex, marital status, education, certification, teaching experience, tenure, and Indian ancestry. These data shed only indirect light, however, on the problem of teacher turnover which must be

considered as part of the staffing process.[1]

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

Not all who enter teaching find a career in the schools. The recruiting and orientation of teachers is expensive and discontinuities may have undesirable impact upon the students.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the reasons why B.I.A. teachers leave the Bureau schools on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.

An attempt will be made in this investigation to determine whether the reasons given are related to personal interests or problems, inabilities or inadequacies to work with students in the classroom, or lack of preparation of the teacher for teaching in the setting of Bureau schools on the reservation.

Importance of the Study

The problem of teacher retention is a current interest of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The records indicate that approximately forty-one percent of their new teachers, if they complete their first year do not return for a second year. For the B.I.A. the problems of recruiting new teachers and of preparing them to work in the local schools represent a major investment.

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[1]Madison L. Coombs, Research and Evaluation Staff, Office of the Assistant Commissioner (Education), Bureau of Indian Affairs, Memorandum (mimeographed), March 10, 1969.

More important, by investigating the reasons teachers resign from the Bureau, insight may be gained for preparing teachers of Indian children, to alleviate common problems leading to the resignation of teaching personnel. Most important, it would be a worthy outcome of such a study if ways of reducing teacher turnover could be found for the sake of giving Indian children a more consistent, stable, and continuous educational environment for enhancing possibilities of learning.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This investigation is limited to the B.I.A. schools on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in southwestern South Dakota. It will include both elementary and secondary teachers who have resigned from the Bureau between 1965-1967. It is limited to fifty-one teachers who resigned their positions during those years.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES USED

The B.I.A. Aberdeen Area Office was contacted to obtain needed information for this survey pertaining to teacher turnover. Records were examined to learn the number of teachers who had taught on Pine Ridge Reservation during 1965-1967 who are no longer employed there. Questionnaires filled out by the former teachers were examined for their reasons for discontinuance of teaching with the Bureau. These reasons were then classified according to how they fit similar catagories, e.g. personal interests and problems; administrative conflicts;

classroom problems, isolation factors, etc.

A review of the current literature was examined to give background information for this investigation.

DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

Boarding school

A boarding school is a type of school where the students live in the government-owned dormitory. Children in the dormitories may range in age from grade one through high school.

Bureau of Indian Affairs

(B.I.A.) The B.I.A. is a federal agency contained within the Department of the Interior. It is responsible for the federal trust obligations to the various Indian tribes in the United States.

Day School

A day school is a type of school where the students commute daily, either by foot or bus.

Elementary School Teacher

All teachers that spend more than half of their time working in an elementary school are considered elementary school teachers. This includes the classroom teacher, special teachers, and all administrative personnel. Elementary schools are all schools that have kindergarten through grade six or schools that have kindergarten through grade eight in systems that have no junior high school.

Lateral Transfer

A change of position from one school to another within the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Oglala Sioux

The Oglala Sioux are one of the seven sub-tribes of the Teton Sioux located in southwestern South Dakota on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Pine Ridge

Pine Ridge is the name of a town and a reservation occupied by the Oglala Sioux in southwestern South Dakota.

A reservation is an area of land set apart for Indian use. Most reservations were established before 1871 as a result of treaties. A few reservations were set up after 1871 either through an executive order of the President or congressional action.

Teachers

A teacher in this survey is any staff member employed by the B.I.A. that must be certified by the State Department of Public Instruction. This includes superintendents, principals, supervisors, guidance counselors, and classroom teachers.

Teacher turnover

Teacher turnover refers to the movement of teachers in and out of the profession during a given period of time; it includes the teachers separating from employment in a

specific school or school district as well as the teachers entering the profession for the first time, changing the location of their assignments, or returning to teaching following an interruption in their career.

Teaching Position

A teaching position is any job assignment that requires the services of a teacher. This includes administrative as well as classroom work.

Secondary School Teachers

All teachers that spend half or more than half of their time working in a secondary school are considered secondary school teachers. This includes all classroom teachers, guidance counselors, supervisory and administrative personnel, and the superintendent of schools. A secondary school is all junior and senior high school grades seven through twelve or grades nine through twelve if there is no junior high school.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There is much discussion of the turnover problem. Farmer, writing in 1964 of the situation in the Navajo schools, comments favorably on salaries, housing, and working conditions, but adds, "Despite this, turnover is high. Many teachers just cannot stand government schools."[2]

Many young people study at least four years in a teacher-training program only to teach a short while and dropout. Why?

The numerous reasons given by 392 beginning teachers who taught one year in Georgia public schools and left their Georgia teaching positions were revealing. The low salary which is a favorite excuse given by educators for the teacher shortage, simply was not the deciding factor in these teachers' decisions to leave. Although 179 suggested that salaries should be raised, only thirty-one named "low salary" as the reason they left.

The teachers gave the following reasons for leaving; family moved (ninty-two); changed professions (seventy-six); dissatisfaction (fifty-one); marriage (forty-nine); maternity (forty-five); salary too low (thirty-three); returned

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[2]Sybil D. Farmer, Selected Problems in the Teaching of English to Navajo Students in High School, University of Texas, 1964.

to college (thirty-two); adventure and travel (six); illness (five); and college teaching (three).[3]

When the former Georgia teachers responded to a questionnaire, 166 were teaching in twenty-seven different states and eight foreign countries. The main reasons they gave for leaving Georgia teaching were "family moved," "marriage," "salary too low," and "adventure and travel." They did not drop out; they simply changed their place of service.

What about the other 226 persons who were the real dropouts? Perhaps alone the reasons that they gave for leaving the profession do not tell the complete story, but their attitudes toward teaching as a career might reveal part of the answer to the question. "Why do teachers drop out?"

The teachers responded to a seventy-three item attitudinal questionnaire (Teaching Appraisal Schedule) which covered eleven areas of job satisfaction and contained two open-response questions. One of the questions was "Were there any problems that you encountered as a teacher that were not covered by the seventy-three statements?" Answers varied greatly. One said, "Absolutely none, I can hardly wait to get back to _____ to teach". Another declared, "Any and all you can think of! After my experiences, I'll never teach anything again---not even Sunday School."[4]

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[3]Frusanna S. Booth, "Why Do Teachers Dropout?" Childhood Education, 44:245-246, December, 1967.

[4]Ibid., pp. 245-246.

The study stated that at all levels the dropout teachers indicated that the principals of the schools played a decisive part in their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their teaching experiences. The teachers who planned to teach again showed the most positive attitudes toward the principals. The comments the teachers made suggested that principals and other persons in leadership roles do not always reflect the very highest level of professional competency.

The teachers' attitudes toward themselves as related to their teaching experiences were significant in their decision to teach or dropout. If the teacher is to become a career teacher, cooperation must develop within the total of national, state, and local communities to provide the climate for learning and growth which foster self-confidence and personal fulfillment.[5]

Out of every one-hundred teachers now teaching in the nation's public elementary and secondary schools, it is estimated that at least six will not be employed in the profession one year from now. Nine others, still in the profession, will have moved from their present schools---at least five to another school in the same school system, at least three to a different school system in the state, and at least one to a system in another state. These estimates are based on findings of a recent NEA Research Division study of

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[5]Ibid., p. 246.

teacher mobility and loss.[6]

The problem of teacher turnover is an expensive one for a school district. With the continuous turnover there is an expensive and time-consuming recruitment program that must be repeated annually. In a study of school systems around New York City the cost of recruiting one new teacher was between $500 and $1,000.[7]

It also means that the vast majority of the teachers are leaving before the district has gotten its financial investment out of the teacher. Teachers spend much of their time the first years in a position adjusting to district policies and accumulating the experiences they need to teach effectively. The salary received the first few years represents an investment in the future.[8]

The United States Office of Education and the South Dakota Education Association have conducted surveys on teacher turnover. This type of survey is sent to the school superintendent who lists the source of incoming teachers and the reasons teachers gave for leaving. Very little is learned about the teacher's personal reason for leaving a teaching position.

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[6]National Education Association Research Division, National Education Association Research Bulletin, No. 46, p. 118, December, 1968.

[7]Garford G. Gordon, "Employment, Assignment, and Turnover," Review of Educational Research, 33:335, October, 1963.

[8]Rufus C. Browning, "How to Tackle the Problem of Teacher Turnover," School Management, 7:80, June, 1963.

A teacher may have one reason for leaving a school and tell the administration something different. In a study of South Dakota teachers, the teachers were asked to list the reason they gave the superintendent and the real reason if different from the one given to the superintendent. Reasons given to the superintendent as the main cause for leaving a teaching position were found in many cases not to be the true reasons.[9]

Some of the needs for a comprehensive teacher dropout study, according to Coombs, are to permit better planning and justification of costs for teacher recruitment and to reduce teacher training and transportation costs to the first post of duty. Furthermore, a thorough study would improve the teacher recruitment process by identifying the main causes for teacher turnover. Coombs goes on to state that the result not only would be a savings in educational standards, but in fiscal economics as well and in the hiring of teachers with greater potential for effective teaching. Another benefit would be the identification of the main causes of teacher resignation or frustration and better preparation to meet these needs which seem to be the principal causes of teacher turnover.[10]

A vivid problem to the local school administrator is the young woman who evidences promise of becoming a good

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[9]Dennis C. Kraft, "Reasons for Mobility Among Teachers in South Dakota Schools," South Dakota Association Journal, 43:17, January, 1968.

[10]Coombs, op. cit., p. 3.

teacher but, teaches for only a few years. Just as she gains the ability to make major contributions, she opts for motherhood and may never return to the classroom.[11]

A major source of teachers is the group of women seeking a profession after their children no longer need full-time supervision. Many women who enter teaching between the ages of thirty-five and forty have never taught before and must first "patch up" a teaching certificate. These women tend to be long term teachers. They have very low mobility, both professionally and geographically, because their first responsibility remains with their family. They would not generally be available for special teaching positions such as those of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.[12]

In contrast to the patterns of the female teacher, few male teachers enter the profession as the first choice; they tend to "back into teaching." If they complete two years in the classroom, they will probably not remain in the classroom but move into specialized services such as administration guidance, or curriculum-media work. Many of them leave the classroom to gain the higher salaries of the more specialized positions.[13]

It has been noticed that the teachers who remain beyond the first year of their employment in the B.I.A. school have found some reasonable agreement between their expectations and

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[11]John G. Jones, Project Director, The University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma. In a letter to Dr. Albert C. Cambert, U.S. Office of Education, Dated May 6, 1969.

[12]Ibid., p. 1. [13]Ibid., p. 2.

the realities of the job. Both their personal expectations and their perceptions of the realities of the job were to some extent a function of their self concept.[14]

In a recent study by Oklahoma University it was pointed out that teacher turnover is a more acute problem on the reservations of North and South Dakota than in any other school of the nation. Many studies have been done to determine the cause.[15]

Studies done to date have been inadequate in at least the following respects: (a) they have been cross-sectional and have not provided for continuing follow-up, (b) they have not been planned in a systems context, (c) often the categorization of departing teachers has not been accompanied by a corresponding categorization of the total teaching staff, (d) the real reasons for teachers leaving have often not been known, (e) there has been no study of teacher characteristics except the most obvious ones.[16]

Teachers in B.I.A. schools meet different situations than teachers in most public schools. Many of the problems that teachers face in Indian education stem directly from Indian history and culture. Some of the complaints voiced by teachers are mistrust, lack of competition, stoic look with little response, lack of parental interest, and not planning ahead. Each of these problems is a result of a conflict of a

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[14]Ibid., p. 1. [15]Ibid., p. 3.

[16]Coombs, op. cit., pp.2-3.

two-cultural development.[17]

Mistrust of teachers is natural on the part of Indian students because the teacher represents forced change. Since the Indians are dependent upon the government, however, they tolerate what the teachers represent. In light of history, one can appreciate the Indian's view point. After being placed on reservations, they lost their economic base and became dependent on government handouts. Rations were used to bribe Indians to sign treaties and make concessions. In order to survive in this system, the Indian learned the art of manipulation. The Indian child then puts on two faces, one of politeness and reserve but rarely trusting the teachers completely, and the second, a face of honesty and sincerity for his own people.[18]

Another important Indian cultural value is that a person should not try to be better than anyone else. This causes the students to lack the desire to compete and not to respond well in the classroom. If a student tries to achieve, he is often subject to peer group and general society pressures of ridicule and gossip. This behavior is typical of societies with limited resources. The leveling influence stems from the theory that anyone who takes more than his share is depriving someone else of his share.[19]

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[17]John F. Bryde, Modern Indians, 1969, pp. 381-385.

[18]Eileen Maynard and Gayla Twiss, "That These People May Live," (Pine Ridge, South Dakota: U.S. Public Health Service, 1969), p. 38, (Mimeographed).

[19]Ibid., p. 96.

The stoicism of the Indian is taught in early childhood and enables the child to face almost any situation with a straight face. This, in the old days, was one of the ways that an Indian could show his bravery. This self control was also used to maintain good relations within the family and community. Today, this impassiveness can be quite frustrating to a teacher who is used to judging a child's feelings through facial expression.[20]

Another problem facing the Bureau teacher is the indifference of the parents to their children's education. Much of this is the result of early experiences with Bureau educational policies and mistrust of the white man. Some of the parents feel that they are forced to send their children to the schools which are often considered "alien institutions completely separated from their home life."[21] Whatever happens in the school does not concern them. With no encouragement of interest shown in the home, it is no wonder that the child shows little or no interest in his education.[22]

Last but not least, a value of our white middle class society that many Indian children find hard to accept is planning ahead. Indians in the past lived day by day with nature rather than planning for tomorrow and waiting for future enjoyments that might never come. This tendency not to plan for tomorrow, plus the government dependency results in a conflict of values between the white middle class teacher

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[20]Ibid., p. 33.

[21]Ibid., p. 33.

[22]Ibid., p. 96.

and the children in his classroom. Frustration and hopelessness result for the teacher and generally he will give up and resign his position.[23]

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[23]Bryde, op. cit., pp. 479-480.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Every year members of the teaching profession sever ties in a community and move off to another one. Sometimes a whole new way of life is begun. This study lists some of the reasons teachers leave the Pine Ridge Reservation and seek employment elsewhere.

Every teacher may have several reasons for leaving Pine Ridge Reservation Bureau Schools, but the reasons collected and tabulated for this study show administration as the foremost reason for teachers changing positions.

Administration in this survey is supervisory personnel who guide the classroom teachers. The reasons given in the questionnaire are not further defined. It is not known what conflicts are generalized under this heading. Many people (teachers included) when faced with an employment severation will direct their hostility toward their supervisor and give him as a reason for leaving.

Several charts are presented to facilitate the understanding of the data. Charts I and II show an educational profile for male and female teachers leaving Pine Ridge B.I.A. schools. The charts also list in descending order reasons why the teachers left the system.

CHART I

EDUCATIONAL PROFILE FOR MALE TEACHERS

LEAVING PINE RIDGE B.I.A. SCHOOLS

Reasons for Leaving	Elementary	Secondary	Degree	Age	Destination
Administration	x		None(History)	34	Public School
Administration		x	B.A.(Music)	39	Public School
Administration		x	B.S.(Chemistry)	32	Left the Profession
Administration		x	B.S.(Gen. Science)	39	Left the Profession
Administration	x		B.A.(Elementary)	41	Public School
Administration	x		B.A.(Elementary)	25	Promotion
Administration	x		B.A.(Elementary)	52	Public School
Administration	x		M.A.(Elementary)	27	Public School
Economic	x		B.A.(Elementary)	30	Promotion
Economic	x		B.A.(Elementary)	35	Lateral
Economic	x		M.A.(Elementary)	33	Promotion
Personal		x	M.A.(H.S.General)	38	Left the Profession
Personal		x	None(Music)	25	Public School
Isolation	x		B.A.(Elementary)	44	Public School
Military	x		B.A.(Elementary)	26	Left the Profession

CHART II

EDUCATIONAL PROFILE FOR FEMALE TEACHERS

LEAVING PINE RIDGE B.I.A. SCHOOLS

Reasons for Leaving	Elementary	Secondary	Degree	Age	Destination
Isolation		x	B.A.(Soc.Science)	60	Lateral
Isolation	x		B.S.(General)	52	Public School
Isolation	x		B.S.(Elementary)	23	Public School
Isolation	x		B.A.(Elementary)	62	Lateral
Isolation	x		B.A.(Elementary)	66	Left the Profession
Isolation	x		B.A.(Elementary)	48	Left the Profession
Isolation	x		B.A.(Elementary)	47	Public School
Isolation	x		B.A.(Elementary)	67	Left the Profession
Administration		x	B.S.(Home Ec.)	38	Lateral
Administration		x	M.A.(Elementary)	38	Public School
Administration		x	B.A.(History)	23	Public School
Administration	x		B.S.(Elementary)	25	Public School
Administration		x	None(History)	22	Public School
Administration	x		B.A.(Elementary)	35	Lateral
Personal	x		None(Elementary)	27	Lateral
Personal	x		M.A.(H.S.General)	41	Public School
Personal	x		M.S.(Elementary)	38	Public School
Personal	x		B.A.(Elementary)	36	Left the Profession
Retired	x		M.A.(Elementary)	61	Left the Profession

CHART II (Continued)

Reasons for Leaving	Elementary	Secondary	Degree	Age	Destination
Retired	x		M.A.(Elementary)	65	Left the Profession
Retired	x		B.A.(Elementary)	74	Left the Profession
Retired	x		B.A.(Elementary)	75	Left the Profession
Health	x		B.S.(Elementary)	65	Left the Profession
Health	x		B.S.(Elementary)	56	Left the Profession
Health	x		Permit(Common)	44	Left the Profession
Health	x		B.A.(Elementary)	34	Left the Profession
Marriage		x	B.A.(Phy. Ed.)	35	Left the Profession
Marriage	x		B.S.(Special)	22	Left the Profession
Marriage	x		B.A.(Elementary)	34	Left the Profession
Returned to School	x		Permit	37	College
Returned to School	x		None(Elementary)	30	College
Returned to School	x		M.A.(Elementary)	56	College
Deceased	x		B.S.(H.S.General)	69	
Deceased	x		M.A.(Elementary)	49	
Economic	x		B.A.(Elementary)	67	Left the Profession

There were thirty-six women and fifteen men who created vacancies within the B.I.A. during the survey years. The teachers that left the B.I.A. educational system were about equally divided between those who left the teaching profession and those who became public school teachers, with a slightly higher number of teachers leaving the profession.

The teachers who resigned and left their teaching appointments listed many reasons for leaving as shown on Charts I and II. The reason listed most often was administration followed by isolation, personal, and retirement.

Chart III lists reasons why the fifty-one teachers left the B.I.A. system on Pine Ridge Reservation. It also presents the total number that left each catagory, showing the percentage for each one. This is presented to give the reader more insight and added information.

CHART III

REASONS B.I.A. TEACHERS ON PINE RIDGE RESERVATION GAVE FOR LEAVING THEIR TEACHING POSITION

Reasons for Leaving	Total Number	Percent
Administration	14	27.5
Isolation	9	17.7
Personal	6	11.8
Retired	4	7.8
Health	4	7.8
Economic	4	7.8
Marriage	3	5.8
Returned to School	3	5.8
Deceased	2	4.0
Military	1	2.0
Other	1	2.0
Total	51	100.0

The questionnaires revealed nothing concerning the personalities of the teachers. They only categorized reasons for leaving. Administration received the highest percentage, followed by isolation. B.I.A. schools on the reservation are from twenty-seven to fifty miles from the nearest doctors and shopping areas. South Dakota's extremes of weather or the lure of a more favorable climate may have prompted some teachers to leave.

Personal reasons were not elaborated on in the questionnaire. Other teachers moved to be closer to colleges so they could continue their education. Retirement and non-interest in extracurricular programs were other reasons given for moving. One teacher that left the B.I.A. said he was dissatisfied with the future of education under the Bureau's present policies. It is also uncertain as to what variances are under the term "other."

Chart IV shows a break-down of the tabulated figures that illustrate where the teachers who resigned from the Pine Ridge Reservation schools went.

CHART IV

DESTINATION OF B.I.A. TEACHERS LEAVING THEIR POSITIONS ON PINE RIDGE RESERVATION

Destination	Number	Percent
Left the Teaching Profession	19	37.3
Went into Public School Systems	16	31.4
Accepted Lateral Transfer	7	13.7
Accepted Promotion	3	5.9
Returned to Further Education	3	5.9
Deceased	2	3.9
Other	1	1.9
Total	51	100.0

It has been noted that the greatest percentage of teachers who resigned left the teaching profession. Some married and began the full time job of raising a family. Some were at or past the age of retirement, and approximately one-third of the group went into public school systems, which may reflect upon cultural differences encountered on the reservation or Bureau policies or both. Others just may have become discouraged.

Chart V displays the years experienced under the B.I.A. educational system on the Pine Ridge Reservation for the fifty-one teachers.

CHART V

EDUCATION EXPERIENCE PROFILE OF TEACHERS RESIGNING POSITIONS ON PINE RIDGE RESERVATION

Years of Experience	Number	Percent
1 year or less	18	36
2-5	18	36
6-10	7	13
11-20	7	13
21 and over	1	2
Total	51	100

A pattern seemingly has developed through these charts. In Chart V, it is noted that the teachers that had less experience have a 36 percent turnover rate from the B.I.A. This seems to indicate that inexperienced teachers admit frustration and failure through resignation. It could also be a sign of the tolerance developed by teachers with more years of experience. More experienced teachers have only a 13 percent turnover rate.

Chart VI will illustrate the number and percentage according to the sex of the teachers.

CHART VI

CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHERS LEAVING THEIR POSITIONS ON PINE RIDGE RESERVATION ACCORDING TO SEX

Sex	Number	Percent
Female	36	72
Male	15	28
Total	51	100

This chart shows that a higher percentage of women teachers resign than men. Here a generalization can be made that men move less frequently because of more specialization such as departmentalized instruction and coaching which has much glamour within an Indian setting. We must also note that women outnumber men in the teaching profession and hence would have a much higher turnover rate.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this investigation was to study the turnover of teachers on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Each year there is a shortage of qualified teachers when school starts in the fall. Vacancies must be filled at the last minute with personnel that are issued limited certificates. Before the problem of teacher turnover can be solved it is necessary to determine why teachers are leaving the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

SUMMARY

Information for this investigation was obtained from the B.I.A. Aberdeen Area Office pertaining to teacher turnover. Questionnaires returned by the fifty-one teachers revealed administration, isolation, and personal reasons accounted for 57 percent of the teachers' resignations.

Most of the teachers who left the teaching profession were women. They indicated that they left the teaching profession primarily for personal reasons, retirement, health or marriage.

Administration was the reason listed most often by the men for leaving their positions. The principals of the schools played a decisive part in their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their teaching experiences. The teachers

suggested that principals and other persons in leadership roles do not always reflect the highest level of professional competency.

Only ten of the teachers creating vacancies remained within the Bureau, accepting promotions or lateral transfers. Sixteen of the teachers that remained in the profession accepted positions with public school systems.

Records indicate that approximately forty-one percent of the Bureau's new teachers, if they complete their first year do not return for a second year. Teachers having five years or less teaching experience created 72 percent of the surveyed vacancies, which seems to indicate that inexperienced teachers admit frustration and failure through resignation.

Since teachers with six years or more of experience create only 28 percent of the vacancies, indications are that these teachers become tolerant toward classroom situations and Bureau policies, therefore resigning less frequently.

The fifty-one teachers ranged in age from twenty-two to seventy-five with the average age being forty-five. This study shows that more than half of the vacancies were created by the teachers under thirty or over fifty. This would seemingly indicate that the Bureau should recruit teachers at an age which is stabilized, preferable over thirty and under fifty.

CONCLUSIONS

The excessive turnover of teachers in the Bureau of Indian Affairs should be a concern of all educators. This

high turnover rate makes it difficult to provide continuity in an educational program. Each year considerable time and money are spent recruiting new teachers which increases the cost of educating our American Indians.

Reservations of North and South Dakota have a more acute teacher turnover problem than most other school districts of the nation.

Administration and isolation prompt many teachers to leave the Bureau and seek other teaching positions. Indications are a need for leadership training for Bureau employees to ease conflicts among personnel, and a preferential recruitment towards teachers accustomed to living in rural and isolated areas. The effect of teacher adjustment and orientation finally results in poor pupil achievement and an education lag among American Indians. Perhaps this is a worse problem than the teacher turnover problem itself, but could be helped with a more stabilized roster of personnel.

Principals and other people in leadership roles should be trained in the field of psychology and group relations. The administration could provide an opportunity for group counseling so problems could be brought out and discussed providing alternative actions for teachers other than resignation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ways must be sought to attain greater involvement of Indian parents in the educational planning for their children. Indian personnel should be encouraged to become teachers and instruct their own people. Perhaps in this way parents would

develop a better attitude toward their children's education and the teacher turnover problem could be reduced by utilizing personnel familiar with the Indian setting.

Orientation in Indian history and cultural values should be required of all other teachers pursuing employment in B.I.A. schools. A realistic picture of living in a small isolated Indian community should be presented to all prospective personnel, and if possible, an internship experience should be acquired under actual living conditions. Preference should be given to applicants who have lived in similar environments as the location of the assignment.

Principals and other administrators should be selected and trained carefully. They must not only be good in public relations but must also have a knowledge in the field of psychology to handle individuals and groups in employment situations.

Bureau policies must be continually updated to meet the methods and needs of education today. Teachers should be encouraged to try new methods of teaching and be given recognition when better achievement is attained.

Study of the problem of teacher turnover is needed to determine what can be done to decrease the number of teachers leaving the Bureau each year.

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